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Summary record of the 8th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 4 October 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Wenaweser ..... (Liechtenstein)
later: Mr. Morikawa (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Japan)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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02-62077 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 97: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/57/115)

Agenda item 98: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/57/31, A/57/67-E/2002/45, A/57/139 and Corr.1, A/57/218 and Corr.1 and 352; E/CN.5/2002/2; A/C.3/57/L.6)

Agenda item 99: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*) (A/57/93)

1. **Ms. Pulido** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that they welcomed the integrated approach of the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/57/115) and concurred that there was a clear and close link between the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit and the special session and the promotion of and follow-up to all the international conferences and summits held over the past two years. Moreover, the agreements reached at those conferences and summits provided an additional dimension to the social development goals elaborated during the World Summit and the twenty-fourth special session.

2. She recalled that the head of her delegation, speaking on the issue of social development at the fifty-sixth session, had verbalized the longstanding wish of the developing world when he had called for an effective system of international cooperation for development to support national efforts. The Monterrey Consensus had provided a platform for such cooperation and heralded the start of an era of increased financing for development. The International Conference on Financing for Development had also successfully addressed the issue of reforming the international financial system. Such a reform would have a positive impact on the implementation of three key elements of the Copenhagen Programme of Action: improving structural-adjustment programmes, promoting an enabling environment for social development and strengthening frameworks for cooperation at the international, regional and subregional levels.

3. Turning to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, she said that it had culminated in the formulation of specific goals and actions in the area of poverty eradication, which was one of the three pillars on which the social-development goals reposed and was indispensable to sustainable development. In that connection, the Plan of Implementation for Agenda 21 built on the actions adopted in Copenhagen and again at the Copenhagen+5 summit and expanded upon the steps to be taken to promote a coordinated approach to the consideration of environmental, economic and social policies.

4. Social integration was another key element of the social-development goals. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing, had concentrated specifically on the situation of older persons, who were often at risk of becoming marginalized: its main objective was to ensure a secure and dignified environment for those persons and to make it possible for them to participate fully in society as citizens with equal rights and opportunities. For several reasons, the Assembly on Ageing had marked a watershed for developing countries. It had highlighted the link between ageing and poverty eradication, which was of particular significance given that it was estimated that the number of older persons in those countries would have trebled by 2050. Her delegation also believed that among the most important achievements of the Assembly were the forward-looking nature of the Plan of Action and the fact that it took account of the requirements of and challenges faced by older persons in the developing world. The Group of 77 and China agreed with the Secretary-General's remarks, contained in his report on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing (A/57/93), concerning the need to strengthen the United Nations programme on ageing so as to fulfil in an effective and timely manner its tasks arising from the implementation of the outcome of the Assembly.

5. She announced that her delegation would be submitting a draft resolution on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing and hoped that the Committee would adopt it by consensus.

6. ***Mr. Morikawa*** *(Japan), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

7. **Ms. Joseph** (Saint Lucia), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), welcomed the statement made by Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. As stated in the *Report on the World Social Situation 2001*, world income inequality had increased in the 1990s despite unprecedented economic growth. The world social situation had worsened, with the Johannesburg Summit 2002 having highlighted poverty as a main impediment to sustainable human development. The Declaration of Margarita adopted on Margarita Island, Venezuela, in December 2001 by the Heads of State or Government of the Association of Caribbean States, had reflected those concerns, calling for a coordinated response.

8. CARICOM supported several other regional initiatives, including the Nadi Declaration on African, Caribbean and Pacific Solidarity in a Globalized World and the New Partnership for Africa's Development . It also endorsed the proposal to establish a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication. In view of the recent disturbing findings by the Secretary-General that the world was falling short in meeting the Millennium development goals, CARICOM welcomed the Secretary-General's proposed Millennium Campaign to make those commitments better known and to ensure that they were the focus of global action.

9. The mandates contained in the Millennium Declaration, the Durban Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Declaration should be fulfilled as a matter of priority and as essential components of the Copenhagen Consensus. In that connection, CARICOM commended the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for organizing regional workshops for capacity-building and networking, including in the Caribbean.

10. CARICOM was grateful to the Government of the Netherlands for helping to fund preparation by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) of a Compendium of selected social statistics of five Caribbean countries (1995-2001). It also welcomed the progress achieved regarding the Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Latin America and the Caribbean (2001-2005) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Her delegation was pleased that UNDP planned to deepen its work in partnership with regional development banks, ECLAC, national think-tanks and academic institutions.

11. Concerning youth, it should be noted that some 60 per cent of the world's population was below the age of 25, with 85 per cent of young people living in developing countries. The dangers of a growing population of disaffected youth were becoming increasingly clear, since what society did to young people, young people did to society. Potentially the most productive workers in a developing economy, young people must be integrated in a meaningful and sustainable way.

12. Society's youth also suffered the effects of trauma and violence, sexual abuse and neglect, with global youth-homicide rates having more than doubled since 1985. The almost unfathomable plight of the child soldier was also relevant to the agenda item under discussion.

13. CARICOM had approved a Regional Strategy for Youth Development to facilitate the development and reprogramming of youth initiatives at the national level. Targeted activities up to 2006 included the creation of youth-information and social-statistics databases, training and education initiatives and the creation of youth umbrella organizations. Strategy also sought to give young people a voice by promoting their participation in decision-making. Moreover, CARICOM countries had launched intersectoral community-based projects promoting economic participation, poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods and health, as well as projects to raise awareness, change behaviour and empower young people to educate and counsel their peers.

14. CARICOM endorsed the coordinating role to be played by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the United Nations Literacy Decade. CARICOM countries had been active in the education-for-all initiative. In May 2002, an inter-agency meeting on youth had been convened in Barbados to explore mechanisms for increasing collaboration and coordination among key stakeholders.

15. CARICOM attached importance to United Nations initiatives in favour of persons with disabilities, noting that some 10 per cent of the world's population had disabilities, two thirds of whom lived in developing countries. CARICOM also wished to reiterate the importance of actions taken by the

international community to strengthen the family, including work carried out by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

16. **Ms. Enkhtsetseg** (Mongolia) said that, despite progress made in improving the world social situation, many challenges and obstacles remained. It had become increasingly evident that along with greater opportunities, globalization had created situations of heightened insecurity, particularly for poor nations. Despite several decades of development efforts, the number of the world's poor remained unacceptably high.

17. Her delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that insufficient progress had been made in implementing the Millennium Declaration. The world could not afford to spend yet another decade failing to deliver on its commitments, which was why all stakeholders must redouble their efforts towards practical delivery.

18. The Government was committed to the implementation of social-development goals. It attached particular importance to the integration of social and economic policies, the promotion of a more participatory and people-centred policy-making process, the establishment and enhancement of social-security systems and enhanced access to basic social services. Priorities for action included the creation of an equitable social environment, improvement of the quality of education and health assistance, the reduction of poverty and unemployment and raised standards of living. The national human-security strategy encompassed the economic, social, environmental, political and legal aspects of development.

19. Mongolia had also been actively cooperating with other States at the regional and international levels. A United Nations expert group meeting on creating a supportive environment for cooperatives, held in Mongolia in May 2002, had reaffirmed the importance of cooperatives in attaining those goals.

20. Her Government looked forward to cooperating with other Member States towards implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action in order to address the challenges faced by older people.

21. **Ms. Bakalem** (Algeria) said that, despite concerted international efforts, world poverty had increased, especially in Africa. The situation was further exacerbated by human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), the spread of armed conflict and environmental degradation. Global action for poverty eradication was thus all the more urgent.

22. At the national level, her Government's poverty-eradication measures included school-attendance support for children from poor families, assistance for families in need and housing assistance. The Government also saw employment as crucial to poverty eradication and sought to provide young people with micro-credit and training facilities.

23. Recognizing that the family was a tool for social cohesion and national solidarity, her Government welcomed the follow-up to the preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004.

24. The situation of older persons and their well-being and participation in development should remain a priority for Governments. A national programme modelled on the International Plan of Action on Ageing, which had the support of civil society, had led to the development of a national social-policy strategy that empowered older people.

25. Her delegation also supported the idea of elaborating a convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Under a recently promulgated law in favour of disabled persons' rights, a special fund was being established in Algeria for that purpose.

26. **Archbishop Martino** (Observer for the Holy See) said that he welcomed the references to social-development issues that had appeared in the outcome documents of major conferences: the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, in drawing attention to the significance of social development and human well-being for all, had stressed the need to address the structural causes of social problems, especially poverty, unemployment and social exclusion, and their distressing consequences. That theme was echoed in the Johannesburg Political Declaration, in which States made a commitment to promote human development, achieve universal prosperity and peace and ensure that their collective hope for sustainable development was realized. Furthermore, his delegation agreed with the Secretary-General's assertion that all those issues were interrelated and concerned all countries, regardless of

their level of development. It was vital to place human beings at the centre of sustainable-development strategies, since real progress could be achieved only by recognizing the essential role of individuals as agents for their own development.

27. The Holy See had established the Pontifical Council for the Family, charged with the promotion of the family as the basic unit of society and the protection of the basic functions of the family, and would continue to resist any attempts to define the family that challenged Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

28. Regarding persons with disabilities, the Holy See had taken part in the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, and looked forward to the possibility of drafting that Convention. Since the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons in 1975, there had been significant scientific and technical advances and a deeper understanding of the situation of persons with disabilities, and in that connection the Pope had recently expressed the hope that the dignity of such persons would be effectively recognized and protected.

29. He assured the Committee that the Holy See would continue to work towards a better future by recognizing each individual's human dignity.

30. **Mr. Zheglov** (Russian Federation) said that the Russian Federation continued to support a priority focus on social development within the United Nations system. It particularly welcomed the work being conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the social impact of globalization, which had promoted broad public debate on the issue.

31. Concerning implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, the regional strategy of action recently adopted in Berlin would be incorporated at the federal level. His delegation welcomed the proposal to elaborate an international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of disabled persons. It also favoured improving the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96, annex), which had long guided national efforts.

32. The Government continued to devote more funds to the social field. Indeed, the social budget for 2003 would top the current allocation by 30 per cent, allowing new programmes to be launched, including a programme in support of young families. Salary reforms were also envisaged, with a view to increasing per capita income. The reform of pensions, student-maintenance grants, child benefits and other forms of social assistance was also under way. The social thrust of budgetary policy was aimed at furthering implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Millennium Declaration, with a focus on poverty eradication and social integration.

33. **Mr. Gallegos** (Ecuador) said that his Government regarded social development as an inalienable right and had consequently established the Social Front, an inter-ministerial body responsible for social policy. Twenty-five per cent of the national budget was currently being allocated to that area, the primary objective being poverty reduction.

34. In addition to the social programmes introduced as part of the emergency and medium-term social plans, the Government was seeking to implement a proactive social-development policy focusing on education and job creation for traditionally marginalized groups. In that connection, he highlighted the creation of a scholarship scheme to enable child workers to return to school and the implementation of a bilingual education programme for the indigenous population.

35. Ecuador particularly appreciated the support of the United Nations specialized agencies, which had become essential allies of the Government in the formulation and implementation of the emergency and medium-term social plans.

36. However, much remained to be done if Ecuador was to achieve the social development goals drawn up at the various United Nations conferences and summits. Many of the country's problems were due to global inequalities in the social and economic fields: poverty and other social ills were exacerbated by developing countries' protectionist economic policies and the enormous burden of external debt. It had become clear that the current economic order represented an obstacle to the political, economic and social development of developing countries, and therefore he called for the design of a new international financial infrastructure which would strike a balance between ethics and solidarity and the distribution of wealth. He urged developed countries to reflect on the situation of

developing countries, stressing that underdevelopment was a threat not only to democracy but also to the future of the planet as a whole. Only coordinated efforts leading to the conclusion of a new international social agreement would remove that threat.

37. Turning to the issue of persons with disabilities, he said that Ecuador had been the proud recipient of the 2002 Franklin D. Roosevelt International Disability Award. Many public and private institutions had been working to promote the rights of persons with disabilities for over 20 years and were committed to continuing the fight. As Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, Ecuador was currently preparing for a regional conference of experts to be held in Quito in 2003.

38. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Republic of Korea) said that, at the major conferences and summits held over the past year, the United Nations had rightly asserted the central place in its work of social development and human well-being and had re-dedicated itself to the goal of the Copenhagen Programme of Action, namely the creation of a society for all ages. The Government of the Republic of Korea had taken an active part in those conferences and summits and remained firmly committed to promoting all aspects of social development.

39. She wished to emphasize the role of families in addressing the multifaceted issue of social development. The Government had participated in discussions on families and family-related issues within the framework of the United Nations and would have welcomed a broader consideration of the family perspective in the latest *Report on the World Social Situation*, prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

40. Since the family was the basic unit of society and the primary agent of socialization for individuals, any measures to achieve social-development goals should take account of it as both a source of and a solution to problems. In that connection, the Republic of Korea welcomed the importance placed on families in the outcome documents of the United Nations Special Session on Children and the Second World Assembly on Ageing, and maintained that families should be supported in nurturing and caring for the most vulnerable members of society.

41. However, a new definition of the family was needed in order to respond to the changing shape of its structure. In Korea, the 2000 population census had illustrated that changing structure, showing an increase in one-parent families and a decrease in families comprising several different generations. Consequently, the Government had been endeavouring to identify the different needs of different types of families and to refine its policies accordingly. Particular efforts were being made to promote social welfare policies to ease the burden on families, the traditional caregivers. Although the Ministry of Health and Welfare was primarily responsible for family policies, it carried out some work in conjunction with other government agencies. Such interconnectedness was important in policy-making, since social-development policies encompassed many cross-cutting issues.

42. She expressed her delegation's high expectations regarding the forthcoming United Nations Literacy Decade and emphasized that, in the age of the information society, it was crucial to conceive of literacy as a much broader set of skills than simple reading, writing and understanding. The Republic of Korea had first-hand experience that the greatest resource for socio-economic development was the knowledge and skills of citizens, since the agents of change in the country had been its highly literate and motivated people.

43. She reiterated her delegation's commitment to cooperate fully with the United Nations to help societies all over the world achieve higher levels of dignity and well-being.

44. **Ms. Lewis** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that the gradual ageing of populations marked a radical change in the human fabric of societies. It had been estimated that, by 2050, 1.96 billion people would be aged sixty or over and that 80 per cent of those people would be living in developing countries. Older people were consistently among the poorest in all societies and suffered significantly higher-than-average exclusion rates, the repercussions of which were felt by the families and communities in which they lived. Moreover, the ageing of populations had important socio-economic implications: States were expressing concerns about the viability of their pension systems and their public sector budgets and about the impact on their health-care systems.

45. ILO believed that full employment in decent conditions was a viable and productive way of meeting the ageing challenge. Greater emphasis should be placed on policies promoting economic growth, sustainable development and job creation, especially in developing countries, where conventional social-security systems applied to less than 20 per cent of the labour force and where few older people were able to afford the luxury of retirement.

46. The Madrid Plan of Action recognized that ageing raised important gender concerns. Women were continuing to live longer than men, but were worse off financially than their male counterparts once they reached retirement. This was due in part to their receiving lower salaries, but also to that fact that they were more often engaged in non-remunerated activities such as caring for relatives.

47. As part of the follow-up to its Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ILO would issue a report on the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation and would address preconceptions and stereotypes about older people.

48. She believed that it was essential to mainstream ageing in the global development agenda, and stressed that ILO was working towards fulfilling the common commitment to aspire for an active and inclusive society for all ages. Lastly, ILO strongly advocated abolishing the subjective stigma attached to the term "retired", which associated the right to a pension with final exclusion from economic and social life.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

United Nations A/C.3/57/SR.9

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Third Committee

Summary record of the 9th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 7 October 2002, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Wenaweser ..... (Liechtenstein)

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Agenda item 99: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*)**

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02-62285 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 100: Crime prevention and criminal justice *(continued)* (A/C.3/57/L.8, and L.10)

Agenda item 101: International drug control *(continued)* (A/C.3/57/L.9)

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.8 entitled "United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders"

1. **Ms. Khalil** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that were members of the Group of African States, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.8.

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.10 entitled "Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity"

2. **Ms. Borzi Cornacchia** (Italy), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors listed, said that the Committee's discussions had underlined the need for an integrated, global approach to increasing international security. The components of the new global threats had been identified as transnational organized crime, trafficking in persons, corruption and terrorism, and a consensus had emerged that such scourges must be addressed promptly. A lasting commitment was needed to providing Member States with sufficient technical cooperation to strengthen national institutions and law and order. The Secretary-General's recent report on strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity (A/57/153), had outlined the current priorities of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, namely, combating transnational organized crime and corruption. The report also provided information on the Centre's technical-cooperation activities in the area of global programmes against corruption, trafficking in persons and transnational organized crime. Technical-cooperation projects had increased from 5 in 1998 to 32 in 2001, and there was a significant discrepancy between the Centre's activities and its resources.

3. The draft resolution was intended to be a concrete response to the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report calling for a further comprehensive effort to strengthen the programme's capacity to provide leadership and services in priority areas.

4. **The Chairman** said that Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Nigeria, Panama, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovakia, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom and the United Republic of Tanzania also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

5. **Ms. Ayuso** (Argentina) said that Argentina was honoured to sponsor the draft resolution, as it had each year. However, with regard to strengthening the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Secretariat, her delegation understood that such an action would not modify its functions or lead to a duplication of tasks or initiatives in that area.

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.9 entitled "International cooperation against the world drug problem"

6. **Mr. Simancas** (Mexico) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.9 on behalf of the sponsors listed and Antigua and Barbuda, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Israel, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lithuania, Malta, Myanmar, the Philippines, Senegal, Slovakia, Swaziland and Togo. He said that, in response to the Committee's request to simplify the draft resolution, his delegation had reviewed the text in order to eliminate repetitive concepts and those which were no longer significant, while taking care that the interests of all countries, groups and regions were duly reflected.

7. **The Chairman** said that Cape Verde, Croatia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liberia, the Niger, Nigeria and the Republic of Korea also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

Agenda item 97: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/57/115)

Agenda item 98: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/57/3, A/57/67-E/2002/45, A/57/139 and Corr.1, A/57/218 and Corr.1 and A/57/352; A/C.3/57/L.6; E/CN.5/2002/2)

Agenda item 99: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*) (A/57/93)

8. **Ms. Jenkin** (Australia), speaking as the youth representative and referring to agenda item 98, said that young people were affected by and concerned about a wide range of social issues, while factors such as HIV/AIDS and globalization posed new challenges for the young. Young people were agents of social change and affected by such change. It was important that they should participate in the decision-making processes that affected their lives, since they would have to live with the consequences of decisions taken today. Youth not only were the leaders of tomorrow, but should also be viewed as active and legitimate partners in society today.

9. Significant developments had been made in increasing youth participation at the international level in recent years. More importantly, youth caucus groups were playing a valuable role at world conferences. Australia had included a youth representative in its delegation to the General Assembly each year since 1999 and strongly encouraged other States to do so. The international community should ensure that the voices of young people representing all minority groups were heard. It was also essential that they were granted meaningful opportunities to participate, enabling Governments and non-governmental organizations to draw upon their expertise; many times, the organizations with greatest impact on addressing the issues young people faced were those where the young had a strong presence.

10. The Australian Government was committed to promoting youth participation and engaging in dialogue with the young. It was also a strong supporter of the World Youth Forum. Proposals had been made to replace the Forum by smaller meetings; however, the Forum was unique in terms of its legitimacy and profile. Limited resources were always an important consideration when staging events of that size, but a well-resourced Forum, held at less frequent intervals, would allow ample planning time and liberate resources to pursue the alternative proposals.

11. **Ms. Aksakal** (Sweden), speaking as the youth representative for her delegation, said that human development and democracy were not possible if over half the population was left out, and meaningful youth participation meant that the strengths, interests and abilities of youth must be recognized and nurtured. That could be achieved by providing real opportunities for youth to become involved with decision-making at all levels of society. Their abilities and knowledge were often underestimated, and if youth became involved nationally, their influence internationally would automatically increase. Youth organizations must meet and work together, with the financial support and encouragement of Governments. Such cooperation would strengthen civil society and increase the influence of youth in the global arena. Governments, including those of developing countries, should include youth representatives in their delegations to the General Assembly.

12. Society sometimes failed to meet its responsibility to include youth. Young Muslims victimized after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and young women victims of honour killings were two examples. Little did the perpetrators of the 11 September attacks know or care that another group of innocent people would also be victimized, through an immediate increase in violence and hostility against Muslims, especially in the Western world. She cited examples of verbal and physical abuse against young people of Muslim origin, and although direct abuse had begun to subside, those young people still felt subjected to suspicion and hostility. She also called attention to the case of a young Kurdish woman living in Sweden shot dead by her father for defying the family cultural traditions. Such acts must be considered murder, and must never be accepted as "defence of family honour". She herself did not look like a typical Swede, with blue eyes and blonde hair, but had her origins in Central Asia and was Muslim. She did not belong to just one culture, ethnicity or belief, and she was glad that Sweden recognized that fact.

13. Exclusion of youth was destructive for society and threatened social and economic development. To

include youth was a responsibility, in order to avoid their marginalization as adults.

14. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) recalled that the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 had identified three main areas of concern: poverty, unemployment and social integration. The twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly and the Millennium Summit had also recognized that the social agenda was integral to all development efforts. The Commission for Social Development had chosen "National and international cooperation for social development" as the core theme for its forty-first session — which his delegation would chair — given the need for States to share experiences and forge partnerships.

15. In Bangladesh, the basic framework for social development was enshrined in the Constitution. His Government had undertaken a wide range of programmes to promote good governance, reform the legal system, strengthen administration and build capacity. It also attached great importance to the issues of persons with disabilities, and welcomed the work of the Ad Hoc Committee concerned with proposals for an international convention to promote and protect their rights and dignity. The Government was working closely with civil society to provide education, training, economic opportunity and rehabilitation for persons with disabilities. The family as a social unit played a vital role and had always provided primary care for children, youth and the elderly. His delegation therefore hoped that the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 would integrate perspectives on families, communities and society at large.

16. The Second World Assembly on Ageing had been a milestone for social development. Statistics predicted that the number of persons aged 60 and over would double by 2050, and the majority of those older people would be in developing countries. His delegation agreed with the view of the Secretary-General on the need to strengthen United Nations programmes on ageing. In Bangladesh, the Government had targeted social security and welfare programmes for the elderly.

17. His delegation welcomed the clear message given at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held recently in Johannesburg, South Africa, that there could be no sustainable development without social development. Bangladesh believed that development was basically a national responsibility, but that it could not be achieved without international support and understanding. In a context of free markets, Governments must ensure that the safety net was in place to catch those in danger of falling through.

18. **Ms. Garcia** (Philippines) said that increased urbanization had raised the number of women participating in the labour market, and advances in information technology had created the potential for increased productivity in many countries. Those changes, however, had far-reaching implications for the decisions Governments must make with regard to health care, education, shelter, transportation, food security and the environment.

19. Globalization and advances in information and communications technology had not resolved the problem of economic inequities and poverty. Families, older persons and vulnerable groups continued to face enormous challenges. Her delegation was therefore pleased to note the preparations being made for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The family played an important role in Philippine society as the main caregiver for older persons, youth and persons with disabilities.

20. The International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, adopted by the Second World Assembly on Ageing saw ageing as a challenge and an opportunity. It called for a change of attitude in policies, plans and programmes to tap the potential of ageing in the new millennium. In the Philippines, older persons made up a small percentage of the total population, but by 2020 their numbers would reach ten million. Hence, the next two decades could not be allowed to pass without preparations; among them was a five-year plan of action for ageing and a number of activities to raise awareness that older persons were also partners in development.

21. Persons with disabilities continued to be marginalized. A high proportion of the world's disabled lived in the Asia-Pacific region, and the causes of their disability were poverty-related. Her Government had endeavoured to reduce their vulnerability and mainstream their access to social, medical, education and employment opportunities. Resources must be made available to enhance national efforts to implement activities for those most at risk due to poverty. Her delegation hoped in particular that the

Development Account would be extended for another year to facilitate national and regional efforts to address the needs of persons with disabilities.

22. **Mr. Ahluwalia** (India) said that social development was the very foundation on which other development goals rested. To that end, a job-oriented educational system was needed, and India had made tremendous progress in that area, raising literacy rates from 18 per cent just after independence in 1951 to 65 per cent in 2001. The Government had made a commitment to guarantee compulsory free primary education, with the aim of raising literacy rates to 75 per cent by 2007, and had created a separate department for primary education and literacy with the mandate of enrolling all children in school by 2003. The observance of the United Nations Literacy Decade beginning in 2003 would be particularly important in achieving the international objective of "education for all". An educated population was essential for social development and nation-building in any country.

23. The International Plan of Action on Ageing focused on the needs of the future, and the projected increase in the elderly population by the year 2050. With regard to the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, his delegation encouraged the United Nations system to raise awareness of that very important aspect of social development. Further efforts were also needed to provide adequate employment opportunities for youth, and the realities of social situations in different economies must be incorporated to bring about meaningful international cooperation in that sector.

24. The report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/57/115) reiterated the importance attached to the eradication of poverty. The World Summit for Social Development had recognized the need for an enabling environment, and the international community had since agreed on the need to enhance the flow of resources from developed to developing countries. However, it was time for international agreements to begin to show results. His delegation urged the development partners to contribute more actively towards achieving the goals of the Copenhagen Declaration and successive additions to the social-development agenda.

25. **Archbishop Martino** (Observer for the Holy See) said that his delegation had joined with others in adopting the International Plan of Action on Ageing, but had noted the statement during the general debate at the Madrid Assembly that too many of the world's older persons were not even aware that the meeting was taking place, much less that it had resulted in a plan of action. Moreover, his delegation believed that the Secretary-General's report on follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing (A/57/93) did not go far enough in its recommendations.

26. Older persons must be included as responsible agents in those decisions that would have an impact on their lives and future. Translating the Plan of Action into reality would require spreading information about it and devising innovative programmes that would put an end to the marginalization of older persons. An inclusive society for all ages, based on inter-generational equality, would ensure that older persons had their rightful place.

27. Worldwide, the Catholic Church operated more than 13,000 homes, hospices and care institutions for older persons — although, admittedly, the number of people served by those facilities was only a small percentage of those over age 60. The Church would continue to develop programmes to help older persons take their special place in society and to help society appreciate the treasure they continued to be.

28. **Mr. van den Berg** (Netherlands) said that his delegation wished to pay tribute to the memory of Prince Klaus, late husband of Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands.

29. **The Chairman** expressed condolences on behalf of the Committee.

30. **Ms. Peeters** (Netherlands), speaking as the youth representative, said that young people were losing faith in the United Nations system as a means of solving the world's problems. Once a symbol of a peaceful and more equitable future, the United Nations was now perceived as a symbol of failure and hypocrisy. Lack of resolve on the part of Member States continued to compromise opportunities for young people's development. Young people, for their part, wished to leave their mark on the world and take control of their own lives. In the absence of equal opportunities and meaningful participation in the work of Governments and international organizations, they were more likely

to become hooligans or violent activists rather than responsible citizens.

31. Young people all over the world had been setting up their own non-governmental organizations and political movements for years. Following the events of 11 September 2001, they had launched initiatives to promote intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding.

32. The vast array of new initiatives since the adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth showed that the international community recognized youth as an important force for economic and social development. However, that force was not being effectively harnessed owing to a lack of support, communication and understanding. The Programme of Action should be renamed the "World Programme of Action for, by and with Youth", with young people playing an active part in its evaluation.

33. Member States should view the Millennium development goals as the bare minimum of what must be done to keep alive the vision of a peaceful, prosperous and more equitable future for young people everywhere. She called upon Governments: to increase investment in youth and youth participation; to take note of, support and communicate with youth organizations and political movements; to include a youth representative in their official delegations to the General Assembly; and to work together with young people to make the United Nations an organization not only of good intentions, but also of good results.

34. **Mrs. Muuondjo** (Namibia) said that the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly remained a major challenge for Namibia. The Government was committed to human development and had allocated almost double the agreed target of 20 per cent of its national budget to social programmes.

35. Poverty reduction was one of Namibia's national-development objectives, and efforts had been made to incorporate regional-development programmes into relevant national policy. The country's poverty-reduction strategy focused, inter alia, on efficient and equitable delivery of public resources, equitable agricultural expansion — including food security and alternative crops — and informal and self-employment issues.

36. A national youth-employment scheme generated employment for young people, especially school leavers. Other government initiatives included the establishment of community skills centres and a national youth service designed to provide civic education and job skills. Programmes targeting youth had also been introduced in the areas of technical and vocational education, health and juvenile justice.

37. The International Plan of Action on Ageing guided the formulation of Namibian policy on older persons. Indeed, Namibia was one of the few countries in sub-Saharan Africa to be granting monthly old-age pensions. State-funded funeral benefits were also provided for older persons in Namibia.

38. A national policy on disability had been in place since 1997, aimed at ensuring that people with disabilities enjoyed the same rights and opportunities as other citizens. The Constitution had recently been translated into sign language and converted into Braille.

39. Despite the significant strides in those areas made by the Government, numerous factors continued to reverse hard-earned development gains, not least the severe drought, widespread poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Given the limited resources at the Government's disposal, those challenges called for swift, coordinated action and increased support from United Nations agencies and the donor community as a whole.

40. **Ms. Kapalata** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that economic development and poverty eradication were overriding concerns for her Government. With limited resources, it had endeavoured to improve economic growth through domestic-resource mobilization and enhanced efficiency and accountability. Land ownership legislation had been revised to ensure increased access to land for all citizens. More roads had been built, health-care delivery systems had been improved, more teachers had been employed and more classrooms built. A scheme to provide universal basic education for all children had also met with success.

41. The country was, however, still far from attaining the Copenhagen goals, with HIV/AIDS but one of the challenges currently undermining the Government's efforts. It also faced the task of making globalization work to its advantage, since thus far, globalization had

only resulted in the absorption of its economy, rather than any true participation or partnership.

42. The issue of ageing should be mainstreamed into all social-development policies and poverty-reduction strategies. The Unit on Ageing of the Division for Social Policy and Development should be allocated the necessary funding to enable it to function effectively, particularly in assisting national efforts to implement the Madrid goals.

43. The future of any country depended on its people, especially its youth. The very survival of humankind thus seemed under threat, since it was young people that had been hardest hit by HIV/AIDS and left easy prey to drugs and delinquency. Clearly, it was in the interests of all Governments to incorporate youth issues into national development plans. The Tanzanian Government, for its part, was determined to capitalize on such an important human resource.

44. The goals were in place. All that was needed was the political will and economic realism to translate plans and initiatives into reality.

45. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) said that various concrete measures had been undertaken in the framework of the national poverty-reduction strategy, which was participatory in approach. Decision-making had been decentralized with the creation of more than 700 cooperatives, and far-reaching social programmes were under way to benefit poor people, including in the areas of education and health. Microcredit schemes had also been introduced in arid areas and support had been provided to non-governmental organizations that promoted income-generating activities. A solidarity bank and a national solidarity fund had also been established.

46. Solidarity and sharing were traditional African values. In that spirit, October had been made "Solidarity Month" in Mali, when vulnerable sectors of the population benefited from generous actions on the part of the local community. Older persons traditionally played an important role in Malian society. As had been said, in Africa, an old person dying was like a library in flames. The Government had established institutional mechanisms that undertook geriatric research, provided free assistance to older persons and coordinated relevant activities throughout the country.

47. The family, as the core of Malian society, was considered sacred. To favour the family, the Government had sought to improve living standards and revise family law, thereby reinforcing parental authority and child protection. Mali had also spared no effort in preparing for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004.

48. Malnutrition, disease, environmental degradation, natural disasters and armed conflicts only added to the toll of people with disabilities. It was in that context that the African Union had decided to name the period 1999 to 2009 the African Decade of Disabled Persons.

49. The developing world had spent some 20 years undergoing structural-adjustment programmes, which had only served to worsen social inequalities and heighten poverty. A just and durable solution was required to address the issues of debt servicing and market access, as well as to combat the negative effects of globalization.

50. **Mr. Mamba** (Swaziland) said that his country endorsed the statements made by Botswana on behalf of the South African Development Community and by Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

51. Poverty alleviation remained the top priority for Swaziland, where two thirds of the population lived below the internationally recognized poverty line. Many of the measures needed to reduce poverty had been identified and embodied in the National Development Strategy, which was in line with the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the related Programme of Action. Despite all its efforts, however, his country was experiencing difficulty in meeting the objectives owing to numerous problems. First and foremost was the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which had spared no section of the population. Rising infection rates were placing an enormous strain on national resources. A National Emergency Response Committee had been established to coordinate efforts to deal with the scourge, with priority going to prevention, care, counselling and treatment. Some of the worst effects of AIDS were being felt by orphaned children, who were dropping out of school because they had become the head of their family. Swaziland was committed to pursuing the approved strategies of medical care although, like other developing countries, it could not afford the costly drugs required and had to rely on the support of others.

52. His country had therefore welcomed the commitments made at the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS in June 2001, but had been disappointed that its application to the Global

Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria had been rejected. It hoped that its second application would be approved. Swaziland had also been hard hit by food shortages affecting one fifth of the population. Drought, a recurring problem, had already impeded his country's progress towards the goals of the Millennium Declaration and it was feared that the situation might worsen.

53. While Swaziland remained committed to investing in its people, other factors were negating the Government's efforts. Real per capita incomes had stagnated since the mid-1990s and the country faced high levels of unemployment and debt-servicing obligations. For those reasons, the importance of international cooperation and assistance could not be overemphasized. It was still not too late to lessen the continued suffering of many people in developing countries.

54. **Mr. Ahmad** (Iraq) stated that many Southern countries were still suffering economically and socially, leading to increased unemployment, disease and poverty. The creation of a just international economic system would help alleviate social development woes in developing countries. That would imply cancelling the debts of the least developed countries, opening markets for their products, facilitating technology transfer to them and harnessing their national resources.

55. So far the expectations of the developing countries had not been met. The recent negotiations in New York and Geneva had not resulted in any tangible commitments towards those countries. No decisive recommendations had been made following the Copenhagen Summit, nor had binding commitments been made at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly to help developing countries eradicate poverty and reduce debts. Furthermore, no efforts had been made to reach the official development-assistance goal of 0.20 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries in order to help the least developed countries.

56. He noted that the developing countries, especially in Africa, were not receiving at affordable prices the necessary drugs to fight AIDS, while multinational pharmaceutical companies cared mainly about profits.

57. He added that penalties imposed on developing countries helped to undermine their political and economic stability. The embargo imposed on Iraq had severely harmed the industrial, health, education and services sectors. It had also helped spread unemployment, poverty and internal population migration.

58. Given also the new demographic shift to an older world population, there would be more need to ensure the participation of older people in social activities, to avoid their marginalization, and to use their capacities and experience to good advantage. The Iraqi Government had adopted a number of laws that treated older people in accordance with the Islamic tradition and international human rights.

59. **Ms. Edstrom** (World Bank) said that the ten commitments established at the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 had provided a foundation for integrating social issues into the fabric of development. Since the Summit, there had been a fundamental shift in the understanding of and means of implementing social advances within the integrated framework of sustainable development incorporating social, economic and environmental issues. The millennium development goals had translated the Copenhagen commitments into solid targets and that in turn had brought about an unparalleled shift in the paradigm for development. The World Bank had come to understand that the new goals could not be achieved unless society enabled poor people to chart their own destinies, and that the economic dimensions of development went hand in hand with the social dimensions. The approach to poverty reduction based on a recognition of the multidimensionality of poverty had created a sea change within the Bank itself. The latter acknowledged that growth embedded in environmental and social responsibility was crucial to sustainable development and poverty reduction and that it was necessary to contribute to a country-led, equitable, resourced, results-based agenda for development which embraced social, economic and environmental concerns.

60. The Bank believed that the international community had an opportunity to promote development by reinforcing the causal links between the Copenhagen Summit, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development and by altering the way operations were conducted at the intergovernmental and institutional levels. The cross-cutting issues just discussed at the Bank's annual meetings were already an effort to move in that direction. Nevertheless, steps towards integration, harmonization and results would be meaningful only if they were carried out as part of the new development partnership, while at the same time

balancing economic concerns with environmental and social considerations. The Bank, through its new social-development strategy, would continue to mainstream social inclusion and empowerment into its collaboration with Governments through poverty and social-impact analysis, civic engagement and participation, security and social safeguards.

61. More broadly it was endeavouring at every level in the life cycle to build an empowerment agenda. It was also increasingly committed to ensuring that young people had access to good health, education and employment and, to that end, it had joined with the United Nations and the International Labour Organization in setting up the Youth Employment Network. With regard to older persons, it had strengthened its cooperation with other international institutions and non-governmental organizations with a view to devising financing and delivery mechanisms guaranteeing a basic retirement income for the most vulnerable elderly.

62. Lastly, the Bank had embarked on a plan to help to make primary education a reality for all children by 2015 and to secure gender equality in primary and secondary education by 2005. It had been urged to pursue similar scaling-up initiatives in two critical areas: HIV/AIDS/communicable diseases, and water and sanitation. The Bank was ready to help the Committee to consider ways of responding to core challenges and to take the development agenda forward once more.

63. **Mr. Langmore** (International Labour Organization) said that it was crucial to integrate economic and social policies, because the traditional dichotomy between them was a perverse basis for solving major problems in the two sectors in the era of globalization. A narrow economic approach to macroeconomic, structural and microeconomic policies had resulted in inferior economic and social outcomes and a failure to reap the full benefits of complementarity. Simultaneous progress in achieving economic growth, reducing inequality, improving socio-economic security, strengthening basic rights and democratic governance and developing sound institutions necessary for the efficient functioning of markets could all be made mutually supportive.

64. The growth in opportunities for decent work and employment would promote such progress. Moreover since income from employment was the predominant determinant of economic welfare, poverty would be insurmountable without access to productive work. Yet in most countries, unemployment and underemployment were disastrously high. The rate of growth in employment was partly a political choice: there were no immutable laws of nature dictating that particular rates of unemployment were inevitable. It was essential to adopt the goal of full employment. Once countries and the international community had done so, all policies would evolve.

65. A national commitment to boosting employment led automatically to the inclusion of a national employment strategy in national economic and social plans. Stabilization could no longer be considered solely in terms of reducing inflation. The ever greater waste of lost human potential must become a central focus, with a view to increasing spending on education and training. Since human services such as education and health care were labour-intensive, their expansion would contribute mightily to employment growth.

66. It was vital that richer countries should support such policies with greatly increased aid, debt cancellation, widening and deepening of global public goods, increased market access for developing countries' exports and more equitable participation of developing countries in global governance. Individual countries had significant scope for employment-generating policies through independent action. The main requirement was sustained commitment to full employment, perhaps the sine qua non for the integration of economic and social policies.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.